REVIEWS

Hundt, Marianne, Sandra Mollin and Simone E. Pfenninger (eds) (2017) *The Changing English Language. Psycholinguistic Perspectives.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 410 pp.

This well edited volume really offers much more than the record of a workshop held at the third *Triannual Conference of the International Society for the Linguists of English* in Zürich in August 2014. It combines research on language change and psycholinguistic perspectives, which is certainly an underestimated and under-researched combination of two important disciplines in English. The major cognitive factors and processes that underlie both disciplines, such as frequency, salience, chunking, priming, analogy, ambiguity (& vagueness) and acquisition (& transmission) are discussed in seven specific parts in this volume, which are subdivided in two chapters each. The most intriguing feature of the volume is the attempt to correlate closely two articles from both subdisciplines as 'companion chapters' in each part. Many important scholars have contributed one or even two essays to the field and the combination of case studies and general principles provides a stimulating new perspective. The very readable introduction by the three editors clearly outlines the overall perspective and the focus of the volume, which I will sketch out briefly:

Under the section on frequency, Harald Baayen and his research group discuss "The Ecclesiastes Principle in Language Change" [Ecclesiastes1:18: For, in much wisdom is much grief: he that inceaseth knowledge increseath sorrow"], and in the corresponding chapter, Martin Hilpert looks at "Frequencies in Diachronic Corpora and Knowledge of Language" (p. 7). Of course, this double perspective on frequency relies on "the assumption that language use shapes the individual speaker's knowledge of language and is at the same time an expression of that knowledge". Thus, "diachronic corpus linguists aim at investigating cognitive aspects of use in earlier generations of speakers" and by building "on psycholinguists' assessments of how frequency of use and the mental representation of linguistic units are related" (p. 7).

The contribution on "Salience in Language Usage, Learning and Change" by Nick C. Ellis points out that the concept of salience includes the three different aspects of psychophysical salience, salience of associations, and predictability/surprisal, which can be measured differently and play a crucial role in language acquisition and change in the linguistic life cycle of erosion and grammaticalization – a convincing argumentation for the research potential

when "Psycholinguistics meets Historical Linguistics" (p. 90). In the companion chapter "Low Salience as an Enabling Factor in Morphosyntactic Change", Elizabeth C. Traugott points out that in historical works, salience can only be inferred, given that we cannot run psycholinguistic elements on historical language users but she points out how stimulating it can be to investigate "to what extent … aspects of pragmatic salience can be considered to be enabling factors in morphosyntactic change" (p. 9 and 96).

The two chapters on chunking are equally interesting: First, Nick Ellis (again) describes "Chunking in Language Usage, Learning and Change: *I don't know*". Then Bybee/Moder discuss "Chunking and Changes in Compositionality in Context". In this chapter, grammaticalisation and automatisation can be shown to be related to the three major experiential factors that affect chunking, frequency, recency and context. "The psycholinguist and the historical linguists thus come to the following agreement: chunking is a basic, domain-general associative learning process which can occur in and between all representational systems. It not only builds the representations, but also organises their relative availability and fluency according to need and thus optimises efficiency" (p. 10-11).

Priming is here defined as "the well-established phenomenon that speakers are more likely to repeat structures or meanings that they have recently encountered (or used themselves) rather than new ones" (p. 11). "Priming and language change" by Pickering/Garrod sets the scene for Mair's "From Priming to Processing to Frequency Effects and Grammaticalization? Contracted Semi-Modals in Present-Day English", where he is "cautiously optimistic that priming, via alignment and routinisation, may provide one explanation of the linkage of individual language use and communal language change" (p. 12).

The part on analogy juxtaposes "The Role of Analogy in Language Processing and Acquisition" by Behrens and "The Role of Analogy in Language Change: Supporting Constructions" by De Smet/Fischer. Here "Analogy is defined as a structure-mapping process that relies on either perceptual similarity or more abstract relations between a source and a target" (p. 12) and thus "analogical overextensions in language acquisition do not result in language change, analogical processes in grammaticalisation do result in a change of the system" (p. 13). The examples in the contribution by De Smet/Fischer comparing *have to* (in analogy with *need*) and *as good as* (in analogy with *all but*) show convincing evidence.

The companion articles on ambiguity by Felser "Syntactic Ambiguity in Real-Time Language Processing and Diachronic Change" and Denison "Ambiguity and Vagueness in Historical Change" have a slightly different emphasis: Felser shifts the issue of ambiguity and vagueness towards a diachronic neoanalysis and

reserves the term reanalysis for online corrections of misanalysis; Denison uses the traditional term reanalysis in historical linguistics. In conclusion, Denison and Fischer agree that ambiguity is often the result of change and "vagueness is typically the enabler of change 'from below'" (p. 318).

The last part is a little different from the previous parts since acquisition and transmission are a much broader topic than the previous determinants for affecting language acquisition and language change. Thus, Lieven's "Developing Language from Usage: Explaining Errors" discusses the well-known controversy between universal grammar and usage-based account of how children acquire first language and transfers this to second language acquisition, in particular the issue how language learners move over generalisations. The chapter by López-Couso "Transferring Insights from Child Language Acquisition to Diachronic Change (and Vice Versa)" provides a critical review of the idea of recapitulation, that evolutionary steps in phylogeny are repeated in ontogeny, and uses the case study on *going to* future time expression in the history of English and stages in L1 acquisition as a convincing example.

Although the main factors affecting language change and language acquisition have been used as a categorisation principle for the contributions to this volume, it is, of course, clear that all the factors presented in this volume are highly interdependent, as the editors emphasize: "For example priming contributes to chunking, ambiguity facilitates analogical reasoning, and various types of frequency (type, token, string frequency) as well as salience, for instance, play roles in analytical pattern mapping and category extension, both in language acquisition and in language change. None of the factors thus drives language change by itself, so future studies of specific changes will need to consider their interplay" (p. 17).

Since this interesting volume is not a textbook but a collection of cutting-edge research in the two subdisciplines, it is not always easy to read. Many tables and figures help the young researcher to understand the principles or, at least, the examples, but they also include some sophisticated statistical models for hard-science approaches. Many examples and most tables and figures are derived from the conveniently large COHA corpus, and the comprehensive list of "Data Sources" (p. xvii ff.) allows readers to consider similar historical studies using the own search queries on this freely accessible database on the web or in specialised corpora, if the phenomena analysed are frequent enough. The well-written introduction by the three editors really helps to keep the overall objectives of the volume in focus, as demonstrated above.

To conclude, this volume is a useful starting point for young and old linguists' further research, especially since it includes an extensive 38-page bibliography

and a useful four-page index that correlates some of the issues touched on in several chapters in the volume. The young may find inspiration of related projects of their own, the older may gain new insights into their research so far, the wide research programme sketched out in this book leaves enough room for all, whether they want to call themselves empirical psycholinguists or cognitive historical linguists, whether they come from cognitive or from construction grammar. Since this edition is obviously useful for every young linguistic researcher, the only regrettable feature of the volume is its price – let us hope that the volume can be made available in paperback soon, so that it encourages more research in this obviously stimulating interface between psycho- and historical linguistics.

I recommend the complete volume wholeheartedly, since it provides a new starting point for investigating the stimulating interface of the two important subdisciplines history of language and psycholinguistics.

Josef Schmied